

Maine Achievement Level Definitions

Grade 8 Persuasive/Argument Writing

May 2007

Purpose: Achievement level definitions describe the quality of a student's responses on state-level assessments in relation to the writing standards for achieving Maine's *Learning Results*.

Maine state-level assessments measure the knowledge and skills of students by sampling identified standards within writing at the grade level assessed. Students respond to a single prompt in an "on demand" setting.

Achievement Levels:

Exceeds the Standards- The student's response demonstrates the ability to clearly state a position and support it with effective evidence. The argument is logical, coherent, concedes opposition and may refute it. The essay is well-organized and clearly focused, demonstrating clear coherence and smooth progression of ideas, and is free of most errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics.

Meets the Standards- The student's response demonstrates the ability to state a position and support it with relevant evidence. The argument is logical and coherent. The essay is organized and focused, demonstrates coherence and progression of ideas, and is generally free of most errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics.

Partially Meets the Standards- The student's response demonstrates limited ability to state a position which may be either implied or stated. Supporting evidence is basic or limited and may not be clearly or entirely relevant. The essay is generally organized, but may demonstrate some lapses in coherence, focus, or progression of ideas and may contain errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics.

Does Not Meet the Standards- The student's response demonstrates a seriously limited ability to develop and support a position, which may be missing, implied but not stated, or stated with little or no supporting evidence. The essay is poorly organized and/or focused and may contain an accumulation of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that interferes with understanding the message of the essay.